

**REMARKS**

Claims 1, 3, 6, 7 and 23 are all the claims pending in the application. Claim 23 has been added herein.

**Preliminary Matters**

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for indicating that the subject matter of claim 3 is allowable.

**Claim Rejections-35 U.S.C. 103**

Claims 1 and 7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Li et al (5,665,163; henceforth “Li”). Applicants respectfully traverse.

Claim 1 recites in relevant part:

“A coating apparatus for coating with coating liquid a surface of a strip-shaped body carried in a fixed direction, the apparatus comprising:

    a primary bar extending along a width direction of a carrying plane...

    a secondary bar extending in parallel with the primary bar and disposed at a downstream side of the primary bar; and

    a between-bars liquid reservoir disposed between the primary bar and the secondary bar...

    wherein coating conditions at the primary bar, which is supplied with the coating liquid by a coating liquid supply flow path, and the secondary bar are set so that the following condition is met,

$$W_2 < W_1 < 1.3 \times W_2$$

    where  $W_1$  is a coating amount of the coating liquid that is deposited on the strip-shaped body at the primary bar and  $W_2$  is a coating amount of the coating liquid that is deposited on the strip-shaped body after the strip-shaped body has passed the secondary bar...”

In rejecting claim 1, the Examiner asserts that Li teaches all of the recited features accept the recited ratio “ $W_2 < W_1 < 1.3 \times W_2$ ”. The Examiner further asserts that the recited ratio is obvious in light of Li.

MPEP 2144.05(II)(B) clearly states “[a] particular parameter must first be recognized as a result-effective variable, i.e., a variable which achieves a recognized result, before the determination of the optimum or workable ranges of said variable might be characterized as routine experimentation.” *In re Antonie*, 559 F.2d 618, 195 USPQ 6 (CCPA 1977). Applicant respectfully submits that Li does not meet this requirement.

Claim 1 includes a primary bar and a secondary bar which are independently rotatable and which independently control the coating amounts of the coating liquid W1 and W2. Conversely, in Li et al., the liquid is allowed to freely flow between the wedge 32 and the substrate 36 and is not controlled in any way. Li does not provide any control over the coating amount W1 and thus provides no teaching regarding the ratio of coating amounts W1 to W2 having any effect on printing quality. Thus, it would be impossible for Li to achieve the formula recited in claim 1. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 is patentable over Li and respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn.

Further, claim 7 depends from claim 1 and thus, Applicants respectfully submit, is patentable at least by virtue of its dependency. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 6 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Li in view of the newly cited reference of Wallsten (U.S. Patent 4,102,299). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Claim 6 depends from claim 1 which has been shown above to be patentable over Li. Wallsten does not cure the deficiencies of Li because it provides no relevant teachings regarding controlling the flow of ink. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 6 is at least patentable by virtue of its dependency and respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn.

**New Claims**

Claim 23 has been added herein and recites patentable features similar to claim 1.

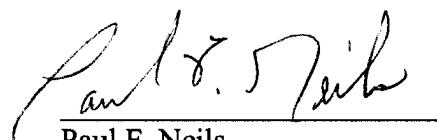
Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 23 is at least patentable for similar reasons, and respectfully request that claim 23 be allowed.

**Conclusion**

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880 via EFS payment screen. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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